

and the testimony has been that from 10 to 20 times the normal dose is the amount causing these deaths.

Yesterday, Dr. Moertel of the Mayo Clinic and Sidney Wolfe, a physician, indicated, if I am correct, that two capsules of Darvon were lethal.

Dr. BEAVER. That is categorically not the case.

Senator HATCH. In other words, you are totally refuting what they say.

Dr. BEAVER. I do not believe they actually said that, but it is not the case.

Senator HATCH. Assuming they did, why would they say something like that?

Dr. BEAVER. Did you say that?

Dr. WOLFE. I was quoting the coroner in San Francisco who said people using it on a regular basis, twice the normal dosage, not two capsules we are talking about but two capsules every 4 hours instead of one.

Senator HATCH. I am glad you were here to correct that.

With regard to those who take propoxyphene regularly in recommended dosage over many years; some people have indicated they may be dying from a drug buildup.

What does the record show with regard to that, is there a buildup potential here?

Dr. BEAVER. There is a buildup when the drug is taken repeatedly at 4-hour intervals at the recommended dose of 65 milligrams.

Senator HATCH. I see.

Dr. BEAVER. At the recommended dose of 65 milligrams there is an accumulation of both propoxyphene and nor-propoxyphene. Both of these flatten out at some level because the more there is, the more rapidly both of these things are eliminated.

You get to the point here where the amount coming in equals the amount going out, at which time you get a plateau.

For the usual recommended therapeutic dose of propoxyphene there is no evidence that when you take 65 milligrams every 4 hours indefinitely you can build up a blood level of either or both of these materials which is fatal.

Senator HATCH. As a matter of fact, at the University of Utah, Dr. Finkel indicated that the record shows millions of patients who use it in the normally prescribed manner do not suffer any serious or fatal effects at all, is that correct?

Dr. BEAVER. That is correct.

Senator HATCH. And Dr. Finkel's findings affirmed that.

Dr. BEAVER. That is correct.

Senator HATCH. Do you know of any deaths which occurred from normal, prescribed use?

Dr. BEAVER. I have not been able to identify any, but you see, often with the literature on this subject even the medical examiner is not certain of what dose was taken. When you have somebody who is dead, it is sometimes not possible to determine how much of what they took, particularly until very recently when you had methods for measuring blood levels. I found no evidence that the usual therapeutic dose of propoxyphene can result in death, and, as I pointed out, it does not